DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 430 147 CE 078 690

TITLE Work-Based Learning Curriculum Guidelines for Cooperative Education. Washington State. Revised.

INSTITUTION Washington Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia.

PUB DATE 1997-05-00

NOTE 16p.; For the "Program Standards" guide, see CE 078 691.

PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.

DESCRIPTORS *Competence; Competency Based Education; *Cooperative Education; Course Content; *Education Work Relationship; Employment Potential; Guidelines; High Schools; Job Skills; School Business Relationship; State Curriculum Guides; *State Standards

IDENTIFIERS *Washington; *Work Based Learning

ABSTRACT

These curriculum guidelines for work-based learning programs in high schools in Washington define the parameters of work-based learning programs while allowing local agencies the freedom to tailor their programs to meet their own needs. The guidelines have been produced in a joint venture of teachers, students, business representatives, administrators, and academicians. The guidelines include the following: vision statement for work-based learning programs; the roles of students, the business community, the curriculum, and the profession of cooperative education coordinators; and a description of methods of instructional delivery. The guidelines define nine terms and provide core curriculum outcomes and competencies for work-based learning programs in these areas: career exploration, employment acquisition, job retention, resource management, leadership development, and economic systems. (KC)

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Work-Based Learning Curriculum Guidelines for Cooperative Education

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WORK-BASED LEARNING CURRICULUM GUIDELINES FOR COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

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March 1994
Reprinted June 1994
Reprinted October 1994
Reprinted March 1995
Reprinted November 1995
Revised May 1997

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The vision statement, curriculum guide design format, and initial identification of program outcomes took place at a curriculum writing workshop held in February 1993. The members of the writing team were:

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Review Process

1. Draft presented at Cooperative Education Conference, March 1993, in Wenatchee.
2. Draft copies distributed to area leaders in March 1993.
3. Draft copies reviewed at Washington Vocational Association Summer Conference in August 1993.
4. Business and Labor Validation Committee met December 9, 1993, and February 1, 1994.

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WORK-BASED LEARNING CURRICULUM GUIDELINES FOR COOPERATIVE EDUCATION

School-to-Work Transition and Lifelong Learning

VISION STATEMENT

Teachers of school-based and work-based learning programs are committed to providing realistic career guidance, quality instruction, effective cooperative job placement, and positive leadership development. Students will benefit from a community-based school/business partnership. Strength is generated from our commitment to our students, business community, curriculum, and profession.

STUDENTS

Students are our most important human resource. Because of them our profession exists. We are committed to providing an educational environment that is caring, motivating, organized, and disciplined. We are fair, honest, courteous, and professional in all our student/teacher relationships. We desire to facilitate student learning and the understanding of work and its importance in maximizing self-worth and potential.

BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Our relationship with the business community is a vital partnership. Businesses provide advice, student employment, and educational resources that prepare young people for their occupations and life. We are committed to nurturing this relationship with the owners, managers, and employees of the business community.

CURRICULUM

Curriculum is the dynamic message we communicate to our students. We are committed to providing a structured curriculum that is timely and relevant while meeting individualized student needs. This curriculum is designed to prepare learners for transition from school-to-work to lifelong learning. We expect our students to become responsible, contributing individuals while becoming leaders in their work groups, communities, and families.

PROFESSION

Our profession is the organized group of cooperative education coordinators. We have chosen to work with our public school colleagues in an integrated effort to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Through our organization we will support each other by providing professional development activities while promoting common goals and interests that benefit students.

INTRODUCTION

School-to-work transition programs such as marketing education, diversified occupations, cooperative education, and community resource training programs are available to students in Washington state high schools. These programs prepare students for the next steps in their lives, whether a continuation of their education, beginning a career, or a combination of the two. In a vital school-to-work transition program, students see a relationship between education and the workplace. In addition, schools and the business community recognize their joint responsibility to provide students with the appropriate skills for an increasingly technical and internationally competitive job market.

Work-based learning programs such as cooperative education have successfully provided students with experiences that meet school-to-work transition goals. This guideline defines the parameters of work-based learning programs while allowing local agencies the freedom to tailor their programs to meet their own needs. The writing team has presented a "menu" of learner outcomes from which to choose. In addition, the collaborative nature under which this project has been undertaken is an important consideration. The effort is a joint venture of teachers, students, business representatives, administrators, and academicians. These programs require constant change, reflection, and review to respond to needs of students, communities, technology, and the workplace.

INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY

Work-based learning outcomes and competencies are attained and assessed by a variety of methods. School-to-work transition programs are highly prescriptive in nature. Student mastery of the core curriculum is attained in the classroom, community, and job site. The certificated cooperative education coordinator is best qualified to facilitate student success that includes interaction with many school and community systems. A local advisory committee is essential to help identify and localize needed competencies and outcomes.

Work-based learning programs provide experiences that will:

- ◊ Prepare learners for transition from school-to-work to lifelong learning.
- ◊ Provide opportunities for students to function as responsible individuals and leaders.
- ◊ Require students to contribute as members of work groups, communities, and families.
- ◊ Promote student understanding of the importance of work.
- ◊ Improve student self-worth and maximize potential.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

A variety of terms are used to describe the school-to-work process. Definitions include the following:

Cooperative Education: A method of vocational education instruction for individuals who, through written cooperative arrangements between the school and employers, receive instruction (including required academic courses and related vocational instruction) by alternating school studies with a job in any occupational field. Alternating school studies will be planned and supervised by the school and employers so that each contributes to the student's education and to his/her employability. Work periods and school attendance may be on alternate half days, full days, weeks, or other periods of time.

Work-Based Learning: A competency-based educational experience that coordinates and integrates classroom instruction with structured work-site employment in which the student receives occupational training that advances student knowledge and skills in essential academic learning requirements (EALRS).

Internship: A time-limited work experience that takes place in a work environment and requires the student (intern) to be competent in the field of study.

Job Shadowing: A career awareness activity with a time limit and specific objectives that allows a vocational student to observe a worker on the job.

Mentorships: Relationships established between vocational students and adult role models that foster understanding of work and family roles.

Nonpaid Work Experiences: Experiences limited to structured work training activities that are time-limited with specific learning outcomes. Students do not receive compensation.

School-to-Work Transition: A restructuring effort that provides multiple learning options and seamless integrated pathways that increase student opportunities to pursue career and educational interests.

Student Apprenticeships: A formal educational process that combines on-the-job training, work experience, and classroom instruction and leads to mastery of a vocational skill.

Tech Prep: A four-year sequence secondary and postsecondary competency-based program that leads to an associate degree, two-year certificate, or two or more years of apprenticeship training; provides technical preparation in one or more specific occupational fields; builds student competence in mathematics, science, and communication (including applied academics) through a sequential course of study; and leads to placement in mid-level technological occupations.

CORE CURRICULUM OUTCOMES/COMPETENCIES FOR WORK-BASED LEARNING

I. CAREER EXPLORATION

Students will think creatively, solve problems, and manage their own career plans while effectively responding to the challenges of a changing workplace.

The student will develop a realistic career plan:

- ◊ Identify occupational interests, aptitudes and skills.
- ◊ Identify main resources for career information.
- ◊ Use vocational assessment information in selecting an occupational area.
- ◊ Identify duties and preparation needed for an occupational area.
- ◊ Connect career goals to post-high school opportunities.
- ◊ Understand the need to change career goals as employment opportunities change.
- ◊ Develop and update a career plan.
- ◊ Name steps in the career decision-making process.
- ◊ Identify a specific suitable career.
- ◊ Explore the personal and financial resources needed to attain career goals.

II. EMPLOYMENT ACQUISITION

Students will exhibit skills and qualities needed to secure employment by using appropriate job search techniques and interview skills and maintaining a personal employment portfolio.

The student will conduct a successful job search:

- ◊ Demonstrate personal accountability for job search.
- ◊ Identify job lead sources.
- ◊ Research and identify job opportunities.
- ◊ Define terms associated with job search.
- ◊ Complete job application and related forms.
- ◊ Research prospective company prior to interview.
- ◊ Take responsibility for integrity of application information.

The student will maintain a personal employment portfolio:

- ◊ Prepare a résumé.
- ◊ Prepare a letter of application.
- ◊ Prepare a sample application.
- ◊ Acquire letters of recommendation.
- ◊ Compile documentation of awards, achievements, and student projects.
- ◊ Prepare a sample thank-you letter.
- ◊ Maintain a computer disk of employment documents.
- ◊ Use a personal employment portfolio.

The student will successfully complete an employment interview:

- ◊ Answer interview questions, demonstrating personal skills and qualifications.
- ◊ Demonstrate interview techniques.
- ◊ Dress appropriately for the job.
- ◊ Demonstrate appropriate body language and self-confidence.
- ◊ Exhibit proper attitude for employment.
- ◊ Exit the interview appropriately.
- ◊ Prepare a thank-you note.
- ◊ Demonstrate job interview follow-up activities.

III. JOB RETENTION

Students will apply thinking, academic, and technical skills while exhibiting personal qualities needed for success on the job.

The student will use communication skills to achieve career goals:

- ◊ Understand the formal/informal policies and procedures of the workplace.
- ◊ Demonstrate negotiation skills and their use in the workplace.
- ◊ Follow oral and written directions.
- ◊ Interpret and apply information.
- ◊ Use conflict resolution techniques.
- ◊ Demonstrate etiquette appropriate for the workplace.
- ◊ Solve problems systematically.
- ◊ Communicate effectively with supervisors, co-workers, and customers.

The student will demonstrate pride in quality work performance:

- ◊ Cooperate with co-workers.
- ◊ Handle materials, operate equipment, and perform job functions safely.
- ◊ Prioritize work duties.
- ◊ Understand the value of work groups and roles of individual members.
- ◊ Make a proactive contribution to the goals of the work group.
- ◊ Meet employer expectations for productivity and quality.
- ◊ Display dependability, honesty, and integrity in the workplace;
- ◊ Recognize and value a mutually beneficial work environment (win-win).
- ◊ Evaluate self for effective work performance.
- ◊ Respond appropriately to work evaluations and take required corrective action.
- ◊ Identify customers and meet their expectations.

The student will increase sensitivity to and exhibit respectful behavior toward all individuals:

- ◊ Recognize and accept different points of view.
- ◊ Explain the concepts of gender bias, cultural identities, and physical disabilities.
- ◊ Practice equity in personal interactions.

IV. RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Students will identify, organize, plan, and allocate resources required for successful employment and lifelong learning.

The student will access the resources of the community to sustain and enhance quality of life:

- ◊ Define the principles of law in the workplace.
- ◊ Explain consumer law.
- ◊ Research and identify agencies to sustain and enhance quality of life.

The student will use the resources of the workplace in a responsible manner:

- ◊ Explain environmental ethics.
- ◊ Define wasted resources and recyclable products.
- ◊ Use materials, tools, and equipment responsibly.
- ◊ Research and identify recyclable systems.

The student will establish personal financial goals and manage finances accordingly:

- ◊ Complete personal tax forms.
- ◊ Define costs, risks, and the need for consumer credit and personal cash management.
- ◊ Explain the types of loans available and application processes required.
- ◊ Explain purpose and need of saving and long-term investing.
- ◊ Evaluate the need for insurance.
- ◊ Apply basic mathematics computations.
- ◊ Use a calculator to solve problems.
- ◊ Plan and follow a personal financial budget.
- ◊ Handle monetary transactions accurately.

The student will allocate time effectively:

- ◊ Select time-sensitive goals relevant to activities.
- ◊ Prioritize tasks.
- ◊ Prepare and follow a schedule.
- ◊ Develop a personal management plan.

The student will recognize the social and personal implications of technology:

- ◊ Explain the use of technology in today's workplace.
- ◊ Identify technological tools.
- ◊ Effectively use appropriate technology.
- ◊ Understand technology ethics issues.

V. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Students will possess work maturity and the interpersonal and organizational skills needed to function in a high-performance society or workforce.

Student will demonstrate a positive attitude by modeling appropriate behaviors:

- ◊ Initiative.
- ◊ Creativity.
- ◊ Responsibility.
- ◊ Accountability.
- ◊ Flexibility.
- ◊ Urgency.
- ◊ Setting a good example.

Student will manage and resolve job stress:

- ◊ Establish self-control techniques.
- ◊ Construct a personal action plan.
- ◊ Practice conflict resolution skills.

Student will demonstrate organizational skills:

- ◊ Facilitate an effective meeting.
- ◊ Participate as a member of a team.
- ◊ Prioritize and manage timelines.
- ◊ Delegate responsibility appropriately.
- ◊ Motivate self and others.
- ◊ Develop and use appropriate problem solving skills.
- ◊ Exhibit decision-making and prioritizing skills.
- ◊ Manage projects within established parameters.

Student will demonstrate effective communication skills:

- ◊ Give clear directions.
- ◊ Demonstrate ability to teach concepts.
- ◊ Follow directions accurately.

VI. ECONOMIC SYSTEMS

Students will understand and access the economic systems and organizations that affect their lives.

The student will visualize the international economy and understand the cause and effect of personal choices:

- ◊ Explain the different types of economic systems.
- ◊ Identify the areas of the world that use each system.
- ◊ Identify the advantages and disadvantages of each system.

The student will learn the principles of our free market economy and understand his or her role within that system:

- ◊ Identify the characteristics of a free market economy.
- ◊ Learn how to apply free market principles to career, choices, and performance.
- ◊ Understand the meaning of "value added" as it relates to employment and customer service.
- ◊ Identify the forces that impact a free market economy.

The student will define various businesses and organizations that support specific occupations:

- ◊ Research the role of labor, trade, professional, and industry organizations.
- ◊ Identify appropriate organizations for student career choice.
- ◊ Evaluate personal benefits of the identified organization.

The student will explore and examine the possibility of using her or his skills in starting a new business:

- ◊ Compile a profile of successful entrepreneurs.
- ◊ Assess the personal attributes appropriate to an entrepreneurial profile.
- ◊ Describe and analyze a proposed business.

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